



Celebrate

Women's History Month



Thirty years ago, Women's History was virtually ignored in the K-12 curriculum. To address the absence of information about women in our schools, the Education Task Force of the Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women in California started a "Women's History Week" in 1978. The week was selected to include March 8, which was first celebrated in 1911 as International Women's Day. In 1981, Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) and Rep. Barbara Mikulski (D-Maryland) were co-sponsors of a joint Congressional Resolution which proclaimed a National Women's Week. This observance was extended to a month in 1987 and March was named Women's History Month. The goal was to ensure that information about the many ways women have changed America would be part of our children's education.

Celebrate Women's History in your school by visiting the National Women's History Project web site at www.nwhp.org to find new and exciting ways to bring Women's History into your classroom.



Activities For Your Classroom

Analyze the female character roles in comic strips.

Explore how women's characters evolved over long-running situation comedies. Look at stereotypes, worn out humor, invisible female roles, predictable responses, caricature, and overacting.

Organize a data search on women who entered the military in the guise of male warriors and spies.

Look at questions on women in slavery—Why did slavery for women carry an extra burden?

Establish a database of female legislators and their proposals for health care, equality, and support for families.

Create a set of study notes on a classic work written by a woman, using the following segments: author's biography, historical, social and political background, map and genealogy of the story's main characters, summary of the novel, vocabulary, character study, essays on themes, historical detail, and author's style and diction, etc.

Keep a Journal: commemorate the work of a female inventor, scientist, astronaut, or activist by composing entries in a daily journal.

Develop a series of correspondence with a notable woman from the past.

Compile a worksheet of eponyms derived from the names of real women: for example, bloomers, Pandora's box, Tony Award, Sally Lunn cake, fedora, iris.

Study common phrases and titles by identifying and explaining the female reference involved in each: Lady Luck, Mother Nature, Queen for a Day, the Angel of Mercy, Ms. Magazine, grass weeds, sob sister, honey bunch, the Sweetheart of Sigma Chi.

Compose an epitaph or memorial to a famous woman.

Compose a local women's history on a computer. Using a desktop program, illustrate entries with clip art, maps, genealogies, stick figures, photos, sound clips, movie stills, newspaper clippings, and drawings. Present the published monograph as a table favor for a Women's History Month banquet or distribute monographs at a tent market in a park or city hall or at your local library.

Organize an art display of famous women artists such as Mary Cassatt, Grandma Moses, or Georgia O'Keefe.

Compile a series of traditionally inspired recipes that feature women's names as creators or inspirations, such as Peach Melba, Madelines.